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VENEREAL PROPHYLAXIS

By MARION CRAIG POTTER, M.D.

ROCHESTER, NEW YORK.

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IN our last lecture we learned that there are three forms of venereal disease—Syphilis, Chancroid, and Gonorrhœa. We have said that syphilis was the most important. It has always been considered such, because of its disfigurements and serious lesions of the nervous system, and its terrible effect on the posterity of those who suffer from it.

The infection of syphilis is constitutional, and may attack and destroy any organ or function in the body. It is amenable to persistent and specific treatment, but if neglected it is prone to attack the osseous and nervous systems, causing various bone lesions, with great disfiguration if the bones of the nose or face are involved. In cases where the nervous system is the seat of the trouble we may have all forms of paralysis, dementia, and death. It is the recognized cause, in the majority of cases, of Paresis, or softening of the brain, and Locomotor Ataxia. It is often transmitted to the child of the syphilitic individual. If the child survives infancy, it usually grows up a weakling, and may develop the most distressing diseases.

Syphilis is divided into three distinct groups of symptoms, known as the primary, secondary, and tertiary stages. The primary stage is the initial lesion, or chancre. The average time of its appearance is twenty-one days after infection. About six weeks after the occurrence of the chancre, the secondary stage is ushered in with fever and rheumatoid pains all over the body, especially at night; eruptions on the skin; mucous patches in the mouth, and wherever the skin and mucous membranes meet; general enlargement of the lymphatic glands all over the body, and falling of the hair. The germ of syphilis, the *Spirochæta Pallida*, has recently been isolated.

About one year after the subsidence of this stage the symptoms of the tertiary or third stage appear. This stage, however, may not come on for years and possibly never. If it does appear, the trouble is always serious. Paralysis and other symptoms may vanish under treatment, but relapses are common, and in some manner the disease is, in time, usually the cause of the person's death.

Syphilis plays curious pranks in its manifestations, but it never

runs an irregular course; its lesions go systematically from superficial to deep, steadily growing worse and more destructive.

The second venereal disease we will study is Chancroid. The name chancroid was originally given to the disease to express that form of contagious venereal ulcer which is not followed by any constitutional infection.

In chancroid and gonorrhœa it is not necessary for the surface to be abraded, as the virus from these diseases may corrode the mucous membrane, destroying the tissue and establishing the disease.

Chancroidal ulcers are usually multiple. They are red and inflamed in appearance, and suppuration is abundant. They increase in area for one or two weeks, reaching variable sizes, often not larger in diameter than a quarter of an inch. Chancroids in a healthy person usually heal readily, but they should always be looked upon with suspicion, and thoroughness of treatment should be persevered in until recovery is complete.

We now come to the study of gonorrhœa, in which we have such a formidable rival to syphilis that it is a question as to which carries with it the more evil. Formerly gonorrhœa was thought to be a very simple catarrhal inflammation, but in the past few years it has been found that it is the cause of many more deaths annually than syphilis, and that it is a large factor in the great number of cases of sterility. The symptoms of gonorrhœa in the two sexes are so unlike each other in their manifestations as to be considered almost separate diseases.

Gonorrhœa begins about three days after exposure. With men there is first an irritation of the urethra, which quickly develops into an acute inflammation.

If this receives prompt treatment, the disease subsides in about six weeks. The discharge from the urethra gradually loses its purulent character, and a thin, non-purulent discharge remains. If the germ of gonorrhœa, called the gonococcus, is present in this discharge, no matter how long since the person has had the original trouble, the disease is contagious, and marriage ought not to take place.

Cases of gonorrhœa which do not recover quickly develop various troubles. Possibly the gonococcus does not stop at the bladder, but proceeds up the urethra to the kidneys, causing pyelitis, abscess of kidneys, blood poisoning, and death. Chronic Bright's disease or incurable cystitis may result, or an inflammatory condition of the urethra, which results in stricture.

Gonorrhœa is considered a local disease. In the majority of cases it is, but many times constitutional troubles develop. These manifest themselves as rheumatism, known as gonorrhœal rheumatism, and an inflammation of the eye known as gonorrhœal ophthalmia, or gonorrhœal rheumatism of the eye. It is a form of septic infection, and may last a few days or a few weeks, but recovery is quite certain, although relapses are common.

Another condition due to gonorrhœa is gonorrhœal conjunctivitis. This is not constitutional, but is contracted by contact of gonorrhœal pus with the conjunctiva, and may affect the surgeon or nurse as well as the patient. It is rapid and certain in its destructive processes. Many physicians and nurses have lost their eyesight from carelessness in cleansing their hands after contact with gonorrhœal discharges.

In women gonorrhœa first shows itself as an inflammation of the vulvar mucous membrane, and quickly invades the whole vaginal tract. Attendant upon this inflammation of the mucous membrane is a thin, viscid, colorless discharge, which speedily becomes thick, abundant, and purulent, and is found to contain the gonococcus, if examined microscopically.

The skin and mucous membranes about the genitalia are irritated from the discharge of the thick yellow pus, the glands in the groins are enlarged, and the patient often feels so uncomfortable and ill that she is confined to the bed.

Enlarged glands in the groin or buboes are the only symptom common to all venereal diseases. In syphilis they are called syphilitic buboes; in chancroid, chancroidal buboes; in gonorrhœa, gonorrhœal buboes. Enlargement of glands in the groin is often caused by colds and other troubles, and, although invariably present in venereal diseases, they are not by any means diagnostic of them. They should, however, always put you on your guard.

Occasionally the disease is like a mild form of vaginitis, which runs its course in about six weeks and subsides, leaving a leucorrhœal discharge, which in time disappears. At the beginning of the disease no one can predict how simple or how severe its course may prove.

The infection usually extends to the urethra and the bladder, causing inflammation of the bladder. The frequent micturition, pain, and tenesmus which complicate this cystitis are the most distressing symptoms of the acute stage. Fortunate indeed is the woman whose disease stops here, for often the poison hastens along into the uterus, and out through the Fallopian tubes, causing salpingitis, or possibly pus-tubes, or general peritonitis, which may result fatally.

It is thus seen that the complications which occur in gonorrhœa may not only be numerous, but serious in their nature.

There may be severe inflammation of the vagina, bladder, uterus, tubes, and ovaries, and yet the disease subside without formation of pus. When symptoms have been so severe a chronic inflammation of the uterus and a persistent leucorrhœal discharge is left, and in a great many cases the woman becomes sterile.

Thus many a husband, young and ignorant, revelling in a few wild oats, has brought to his wife a disease which has caused her death, or, if she escaped with her life, has kept her constantly dragged down physically, and blighted his own hopes of happiness to be found in children.

I have referred to gonorrhœal conjunctivitis; this disease may be produced by an infinitesimal part of a drop of pus containing the gonococcus coming in contact with the eye.

In nursing you will often be called to irrigate the bladder, and give baths, douches, and enemata. In irrigating the bladder you cannot be too careful or too conscientious in sterilizing the catheter and the solution to be used. This should be done not only for the good of the patient, but for your own safety, and, having performed the duties, under no consideration let an interval of time elapse before your hands are thoroughly cleansed. Many physicians and nurses have lost the sight of one or both eyes because this precaution has not been properly carried out. There should never be a common towel even in a family.

In gonorrhœal conjunctivitis the rapidity with which the symptoms aggravate is often appalling. The slight, dry, sandy feeling attending the first congestion of the eye is of the shortest duration, as is the secretion of tears and muco-pus. Within a few hours after ontagion the discharge is purulent, and the inflammatory symptoms go on increasing in severity until in three or four days, often sooner, destruction of sight is inevitable. Sometimes the safety of the eye is compromised in a few hours.

A large proportion of the cases of severe inflammation of the eyes in new-born infants is due to the gonococcus in the passages of the mother infecting the eyes of the child at birth. It is for this reason that so much stress is laid on the care of the eyes of the new-born babe. Before every delivery the mother, if possible, should be douched with bichloride, and the child's eyes immediately after birth flooded with some form of silver, to destroy any possible infection. The care of diseased eyes, the protection of sound eyes, and the pro-

tection of your own eyes in these cases cannot be too urgently impressed upon you. In caring for sore eyes, no matter how simple the condition seems, never use the same cotton for both eyes.

In caring for a baby, if the eye begins to look red, begin cold compresses, cleanse the eye every twenty minutes, and call a physician without delay if there is the least accumulation of secretion. In children or in grown persons who do not understand the gravity of the condition, the sound eye should be protected by sealing it with lint and collodion.

Blindness is not prevalent here, but in the poor quarters of large cities, and in foreign countries, the amount of blindness is dreadful to contemplate. In Japan loss of sight is so common that there is a law reserving the right for the blind to give all massage treatments. One often hears a faint whistle blown out in the street, and, upon inquiring, is told that it is a blind masseur announcing his presence.

In China the blind are allowed to beg in the streets one half-day in the week. They are tied together in groups of a dozen or more, and wander about soliciting alms. At this time so many are seen in the streets that it seems as if the city were given up to the horrors of blindness. It was the most pitiful sight I have ever witnessed. One-third of this blindness is due to lack of proper attention to the eyes of children at birth.

In connection with venereal diseases there are often found vegetations known as venereal warts. They may be caused by the contact of irritating secretions with the mucous membranes, or simply by lack of cleanliness. They are not necessarily venereal. The observance of cleanliness alone often causes these vegetations to shrink up and disappear.

We have learned that in syphilis the secretions from the chancre and mucous patches, and the blood of the patient, are contagious, but that there must be an abraded surface for the inoculation to work. Consequently, if a nurse keeps her hands free from abrasions there is no danger of infection.

In chaneroid the ulcers are so sore and angry-looking that attention is at once attracted to them, and a person is forewarned that danger is lurking, and that extra cleanliness should be observed. In gonorrhœa the discharges are acrid and infectious, and thorough bathing of the hands after any dressing is the nurse's only safety.

Cleanliness, absolute and perfect, must always be observed for self-protection.

At present rubber gloves are used a great deal, not only by

physicians, but by housewives. A nurse need never hesitate to wear them, and should always have a pair in readiness.

These lectures were first given seven years ago by invitation of Miss Palmer, then superintendent of the Rochester City Hospital, to warn the nurses from the standpoint of self-protection against contagious diseases. At that time it seemed almost unprofessional to mention the subject of venereal diseases even to nurses. Since then there has been a great revulsion of feeling in the scientific medical world in regard to this subject. It recognizes itself face to face with the problem of a great class of uncontrolled, preventable contagious diseases, compared to which all other contagious diseases combined are as a pigmy to a giant; a class of diseases which are filling insane hospitals and exterminating families; which are not only ruining the health and happiness of wives, but killing many as surely as though pierced with a bullet.

The case of Gillette, with which we are all familiar, and in which the murdered woman was a consenting party to the original guilt, seems mild in its criminality compared to the guilt of the husband who slays a pure, innocent, and unsuspecting wife by infecting her with a loathsome disease.

The following quotations are from papers given at the Fifty-Seventh Annual Session of the American Medical Association, in a symposium on "Venereal Diseases and the Duty of the Profession to Womankind," under the heading, "Relation to Matrimony and Heredity."

"The relations of the affections under discussion to matrimony and to heredity should not be overlooked. The intimacy of married life is such that it is almost inevitable that when one of the contracting parties is affected the other becomes affected also. Of married women who acquire venereal diseases, fully eighty-five per cent. are infected innocently."

"When it comes to heredity, both gonorrhœa and syphilis display their appalling effects. As a prolific cause of so-called race suicide, voluntary abortions are as nothing compared to these. Gonorrhœa exhibits its malign influence by rendering its subjects, both male and female, sterile, preventing impregnation; while syphilis attains the same end by bringing about countless abortions, even with women who yearn for motherhood, whose fondest wish is that of rearing a family. Syphilis in either parent contributes to the same unhappy end."

"The nation that is exempt from venereal imputation has not

yet been discovered. So far as statistics are able to determine, syphilis prevails among urban populations to the extent of from seven to fourteen per cent. at the present time; and it is further estimated that upward of ninety per cent. of all men have gonorrhœa at some time in their lives. Like pale death, that knocks with equal fate at cottage door and palace gate, these diseases are not respecters of class, age, color, condition, or occupation."

"It is especially needful that the venereal infection should be cleared away from marriage, the breeding-place of humanity, so that the springs of heredity may be kept pure and children no longer be deprived of their rightful heritage of vitality, health, and vigor."

"The public should know that the introduction of venereal infection into marriage constitutes its chief social danger, and at the same time makes up the saddest chapter in the martyrdom of women."

"The duty of the physician seems plain in this matter. He should work in season and out of season, in private office and in public function, in medical societies and in law-making bodies, until aroused and intelligent public sentiment enacts measures to restrict and to suppress the contagious perils of venery. Only when we have accomplished this can we count on a reasonable guarantee of safety for women in the marriage contract."

The Vermont State Board of Health sends out the following leaflet to physicians for distribution to patients suffering from venereal diseases:

"It is estimated that eighty per cent. of all deaths from pelvic diseases in women are due to gonorrhœa. Twenty per cent. of all blindness is due to gonorrhœal infection of the new-born. Fifty per cent. of all involuntary childless marriages are caused by gonorrhœa of the female organs of generation, of which forty-five per cent. are due to marital infection by men. In this country it is impossible to quote statistics, as they never have been gathered. The committee of fifteen estimated that there were annually two hundred thousand cases in New York City alone. In Prussia, where they have more reliable data, it has been stated that typhoid fever represents a yearly loss of eight million marks, while the increased expenses and decreased income caused by venereal diseases amount to ninety million marks annually, an amount which exceeds that caused by tuberculosis. But the financial loss is of minor importance compared with the enormous social changes and consequent social misery."

North Dakota requires applicants for marriage licenses to present a certificate from three physicians appointed by the county judge,

showing freedom from venereal diseases, habitual drunkenness, insanity, and tuberculosis. Michigan and Indiana have enacted similar laws, but not so far-reaching.

In the light of our present knowledge, we can scarcely believe that diseases so fraught with destruction to life and happiness have had no warning raised against them, except that contained in the old Mosaic Law.

My knowledge of medicine in general, and my experience in dispensaries and the wards of hospitals, would lead me to believe that the above statistics might not be exaggerated; but in twenty-three years of private practice, limited to women and children, I cannot find that I have treated ten cases of syphilis at any stage, and, having been associated with my father several years and had intimate knowledge of his work, which covered over forty-three years of active country practice, where a venereal case was of the rarest of rare occurrences, it leads me to hope that there is a great class which has been overlooked statistically, where uprightness and thrift are a saving grace.

A few years ago one dared not breathe the word consumption in the presence of its victim, and consumptives were allowed to scatter their germs broadcast without doing one intelligent, helpful thing for their own recovery or for the prevention of infecting their friends. How different now, since publicity of its contagious nature has become its safeguard, and how wonderful and surprising are the results! Instead of being depressed, they are cheerful in carrying out reasonable and intelligent methods of cure and eradication of the disease. If tuberculosis is called the White Plague, surely venereal disease is the blackest of Black Plagues.

Publicity of the menace venereal diseases are to humanity is not far off, and will do much to prevent the trouble. "Self preservation is the first law of nature," and all men, if not morally upright, are physically cowards, and would not willingly bring such diseases and misery upon themselves.

In Scandinavia, where these diseases have been among reportable contagious diseases for thirty years, the result has been that these pestilences have been reduced during that time thirty-four per cent.

To quote again from the *American Medical Journal*:

"The most important function of the human body biologically is reproduction. Behind this function the Creator placed a dominating, imperative sexual impulse to reinsure its activity."

Legislation alone will not reach this problem, and even if it could, it is not yet here.

Various authors have dilated upon the misery entailed from violations of the Seventh Commandment, but so far none of their writings has proved an "Uncle Tom's Cabin" to the cause.

One of the first books given to me to read by my mother was "Old Town Folks." Not a name, nor a place, in the book is remembered, but one pen-picture painted in Harriet Beecher Stowe's inimitable style has always remained with me. It is the picture of the little heroine clasping to her heart her own husband's illegitimate child, with feelings only of pity for its outcast mother. The picture has always in my mind been surrounded with the beauty of purity as with a halo. No girl could read the book without aspiring to that same noble character, and no boy could read it without wishing to live up to the best within him, so as to be worthy some day of such a true wife.

Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter" is a notable example of the type of literature to which we have referred. In George Eliot's "Adam Bede" we see in Kitty the undisciplined love for flattery and coquetry which is the ruination of thousands of girls to-day.

Daudet dedicated "Sapho" to his sons when they were twenty years of age, and no doubt wrote the book with all the zeal a father could put into an appeal to save his sons from lives of immorality. But twenty years of age is too late for men to begin to learn the philosophy of right living.

In "The Heavenly Twins" Sarah Grand has portrayed, to all who have the keynote to understand, the destruction by syphilis of a mother and her child.

Frances Hodgson Burnett in "A Lady of Quality" iterates and reiterates that one breach in chastity brands a woman for life.

Dr. Cordelia Green had this great social problem in mind when she wrote "Build Well," a book whose very name is an inspiration to better living.

At one time a bride, a beautiful woman, consulted a physician in regard to sores that proved to be chancroids. The physician, knowing the patient, was speechless with the horror of it, and the criminality of the husband. But the patient went chatting on, taking her discomfort as a matter of course, saying among other things how good her husband was, how they grew up together, had joined the church at the same time, and how much he loved his mother, having always written to her twice a week since he left home for college.

The church has not compassed this question of social purity; mother love, trustful and unenlightened, has failed. The boy's physical salvation lies in being trained to a white life. We believe that a man's purposes, character, and influence can be changed in the twinkling of an eye by the transforming, regenerating power of the grace of God, but the laws of nature are inexorable, and a man's physical sins follow his children "even to the third and fourth generation."

A new era in education has been opened up by the American Medical Association, through their education of the masses by publicity of facts.

A warfare involving ninety per cent. of the men of the world has never before been waged, nor one carrying with it so much death and destruction, and slaughter of the innocent.

The statistics given before this most august and scientific body of physicians were unchallenged, and are a staggering reflection on the training of children. In the light of present knowledge it would seem that parents are criminally culpable if they send their sons out into the world ignorant of pitfalls that ninety out of one hundred are sure to fall into, and that will prove death-traps to many of them physically as well as morally.

There is no legislation against this terrible plague. Education and enlightenment must precede legislation. We who are in professions that bring us in close touch with the problems of humanity, and who therefore have the knowledge, must ask ourselves what is our part in this great warfare, between the white life and this black plague that is travelling from individual to individual and threatening the nations. In asking for these lectures you have shown the responsibility you feel in the matter by requesting me to formulate some definite, practical help for you to give to mothers.

A family physician once gave a father some literature to teach his son the evils in the world. The father returned it, saying he did not wish to have his boy frightened to death.

A young physician had a Sunday-school class of High School boys. About Christmas-time one of the class asked him to explain to them the mystery of birth. After considering the subject most thoughtfully for a week, he decided, in view of their age and his scientific knowledge of the subject, that it was a reasonable thing for him to tell them, which he did the following Sunday.

We would expect mothers to feel grateful to that young Christian doctor, but such was not the case. Three of the mothers took their

children out of the class immediately because they had been told such dreadful things, and it resulted in the young man giving up the class. These incidents teach us what great tact we must use in trying to help mothers, and that we must be prepared even then to find our good impulses often misinterpreted.

A story is told that Mr. Horace Mann once exclaimed enthusiastically on being shown a beautiful and expensive school building for boys: "It is a great undertaking, but if only one boy is saved, it will have paid!" The reply was: "You hardly mean that all this expenditure and labor would be warranted if it succeeded in saving only one boy!" "Yes," said Mr. Mann; "if it were my boy." Let us feel no time, trouble, or disappointment too great if it saves one boy.

Not long ago a mother consulted me in regard to her attractive young step-daughter, who was just sixteen. The mother was told if a young girl never crossed the threshold of undue familiarity, she was safe. She was advised to teach her to discourage familiarities on the part of young men, not to allow one to put his arm about her, nor to press her hand, nudge her, or touch her in any way. If any young man persisted in teasing and annoying her, she should talk it over with her mother for advice how to treat the acquaintance. She was also advised to forbid her daughter driving for pleasure with a young man, or joining a house party. The mother replied: "Oh, thank you! I have been in misery! Young people seem to be treading such dangerous pathways. I felt there were many things I ought to tell Ruth, but did not know how to do it. I can never tell you how much you have relieved my mind, for you have made it so easy for me to begin."

Not long after, in a sermon on "The Secret of Self Control," I heard Dr. Mackay of New York give expression to the same thought, but graced with the convincing power of his great oratory:

"A heedless word, a careless look, a chance meeting—how often to the man or woman without self-restraint these things are as doors that swing outward to the wilderness of ruined character and reputation! What may seem trivial improprieties may be the gateway to great moral tragedies."

As the Eighth Commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," stands for an honest life, and a child is trained to it from infancy, so the Seventh Commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," stands for a pure life. Too long mothers have hurried over it with averted eyes, thinking instinct would teach their children the propriety of

keeping it. Mothers cannot know how teeming the world is with temptation, but it is time for them to arouse themselves and find out, and help right this wrong.

Mothers must learn that keeping the Seventh Commandment is the crucial test of a pure life, and not the beginning of it. There are associations to teach temperance, there are societies to teach patriotism, but the mothers in the home must teach their children social purity.

In my mind the training of a child for purity in life covers four periods. For infancy, modesty in manner; for young childhood, purity of thought; for adolescence, chastity in habits; for youth, Christlikeness in all things.

Honesty is not the flower of a single day's bloom. The bank president who has heeded his childhood lesson that to open another's letter is dishonest does not fall victim to a defaulter's temptation.

Children must be taught modesty from infancy. As an infant is taught honesty and other people's rights by "Must n't touch," so can an infant be taught modesty. Mothers should give their children bright pretty bath-robcs and teach them to wear them, and they should also wear their own. Nude pictures of young children, and frolics in a home, morning and evening, of children clothed—or rather unclothed—like little savages, can only be demoralizing.

One evening a child three years old was being hurried into his pajamas by his mother when there were several people in the room. All conversation ceased, and interest centred in the child. He looked over his shoulder and in an injured but reproving tone said: "You should n't look at me."

A child has its rights, and it should be given, so far as possible, the rights of privacy that older people enjoy.

Children can be taught that the setting sun is their curfew bell, and that there is no place for safety and security like their own home, under the roof with their mother. Such training would save many mothers from sitting up until midnight in tears, for their sons to come home.

Girls should be told that "a vile tongue is an abomination," that they should not listen to things they could not repeat to their mothers, that it is not respectful on the part of a young man to kiss a girl, unless under the shadow of the marriage altar, nor respectable for a girl to allow it.

More than this, girls must learn to look upon "motherhood as the crown of womanhood," and train themselves mentally, morally, and physically to meet its responsibilities.

Boys must be taught that "evil communications corrupt good manners," and that impure and evil thoughts are dangerous seeds to sow. They must be given sex knowledge, and be taught, by being careful in little things, habits of self-control from childhood. They must know by being told that for them to heedlessly kiss a girl, or to indulge in undue familiarity or obscene allusions, or to countenance them in others, weakens their moral stamina and lowers their manhood. They must be told that continence is compatible with health and happiness, and that it is the only way for them to be sure of freedom from diseases that could infect or possibly kill a wife, and taint, if not destroy, their children. A sense of responsibility should be inculcated into their lives toward the future wife and children.

Young men must also be taught that to marry and establish a home and rear a family is their duty in the great social economics of the world, and that the same impulses that impel them to love and marriage will, if prostituted, lead them to sin and desolation.

When you graduated, your education had only begun. Like all professional people, you are expected to educate yourselves constantly in your profession, by reading, by attending lectures, and by giving to others and gaining from them in organized societies. You must have the latest authorities at your command on hygiene, sanitation, and everything that pertains to helpfulness in the homes you enter. Inspire mothers to read and to take educational journals like your own special journal, *THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING*, and other journals such as *Motherhood*. Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, Herbert Spencer, Howard Griggs, William James, and many other writers have made valuable contributions toward the moral education of the young. If you can inspire every mother to read the chapter on Habit, by William James, in his "Principles of Psychology," you will have done a noble work. In this chapter he speaks of character as "an aggregate of tendencies to act in a firm and prompt and definite way upon all the principal emergencies of life."

In weaving bundles of habits into a protecting armor of character, let us seek to influence parents not to let ignorance be its one weak point, but to implant in the foreheads of their children the jewel of scientific knowledge that will not only light up the good, but will flash out on evil when it arises to destroy, and cause the temptation to vanish.

Who can estimate the value to the world of a true, pure life! The Evelyn Nesbit Thaw case shows how a girl may be led step by step into trouble, and what an important rôle the café and midnight

supper play in her downfall. The case also teaches that, by the age of sixteen, home influences have accomplished their work of forming tendencies in a child's life for right or wrong. In the light of such facts, infancy seems too late to begin a child's training; let us encourage parents, by self-discipline, to give their children the benefit of prenatal influences for good.

If "high thinking and right living" are habits from the very cradle, great physical temptations, however alluringly presented, will be resisted and this Black Plague will receive its death-blow.

"Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price. Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?"

"Self reverence, self knowledge, self control. These three alone lead life to sovereign power."

IS THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF TRAINING FAIR TO THE PUPIL NURSE?*

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Vice-President New York Academy of Medicine, etc.

My address this afternoon is not intended as an unfriendly criticism of the present system of training nurses. It is far from my wish to invite more or less angry retort, nor do I desire to provoke intemperate rejoinder or the retort with which our childhood days were familiar: "You're another!" It is rather the purpose of this paper to invite discussion of a subject which needs discussion, not with heat, but calmly and dispassionately, with the desire to get at nothing save the truth. Nothing is ever gained on either side, if there *are* sides to this question of the trained nurse, by recrimination, nor will heated editorials, with much calling of hard names, serve to elucidate matters. To use a somewhat overworked phrase, what we need is light, not heat. Moreover, coöperation is necessary between nurses and doctors. We cannot do our best work, or even very good work, certainly in public institutions, without your aid, and I do not suppose

*Read at the informal meeting of the New York State Nurses' Association in Brooklyn, November, 1906.